

How to Write a Thesis Statement

A **thesis statement** is a sentence in the introduction that states the writer's purpose – what the paper is about.

Tips for Writing Your Thesis Statement

1. Determine what kind of paper you are writing:

- An **argumentative** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

Example of an argumentative thesis statement:

High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.

The paper that follows should:

- present an argument and give evidence to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college

Activity 1: Answer the following questions using the information provided:

1. **Thesis Statement: Elvis Presley was an extremely influential musician and public figure.** What will the paper be about?
2. **Thesis Statement: Eating the right foods can improve one's physical appearance, ability to learn, and one's ability to think critically.** What is this paper about?

Activity 2: Now that you know what a thesis statement looks like, let's practice recognizing sentences that are NOT thesis statements. Before you begin you must follow these rules:

RULES

1. NEVER EVER say "This paper is about . . ."